

of Lorenzo Cervantes and hundreds of thousands of others. And then came Vladimir Putin with this unprovoked attack on Ukraine. He thought they would be a pushover. He had this massive Russian army mobilizing over a span of months ready to attack. And when he launched his attack, he expected the people of Ukraine to fold, quit, and leave. But they didn't. They fought and they have been an inspiration ever since.

Putin wants to write a new world order. He wants to say to the living veterans of World War II and their families: You wasted your time. I can do this if I wish. I have the power. But he has run into a force he didn't anticipate. The Ukrainians have done an incredible job, an inspiring job to the world.

And I want, of course, to say a word of praise to their President. Mr. Zelenskyy started in life as a stand-up comedian. Somehow or another, he has become the world's leading stand-up President—standing up to a tyrant like Vladimir Putin, inspiring people all around the world to join in this effort to save his nation.

I am glad that the United States is on board, and we will continue to help him until Putin is finally gone. The genocide which he is inflicting on the Ukrainian people is an embarrassment to the 21st century. To think that this could happen in the so-called civilized western world is virtually unthinkable. We have got to make a stand, and I am glad that we have. I support President Biden and the NATO alliance who are standing behind the people of Ukraine.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The Republican leader is recognized.

REMEMBERING ORRIN G. HATCH

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, as the Senate convenes today, we are mourning the loss of our dear friend and legendary former colleague, Orrin Hatch.

When Senator Hatch retired 3 years ago, this body lost its longest serving Republican and its President pro tem. We also lost one of the kindest and best humored colleagues any of us had ever served with and, for that matter, the Senate's only former band manager of a Mormon folk music group.

Orrin Hatch led an incredibly full, interesting, and accomplished life. By the end of his tenure, our very funny colleague liked to poke fun at his own longevity. I remember when Orrin, a former Judiciary Committee chairman, would pretend to wistfully recall his work on Justice Joseph Story's confirmation back in 1811.

Humor aside, the reality was impressive enough. Orrin's dogged service for Utah and our Nation was a constant in this Chamber for 42 years. He was an accomplished, influential chairman of three major committees: HELP, Judiciary, and Finance. He was an essential legislator behind a long list of landmark laws—from the Hatch-Waxman law on generic drugs in the 1980s to the Americans with Disabilities Act, to the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, and the State Children's Health Insurance Program—all back in the 1990s—all the way through to the historic 2017 tax reform that Orrin shepherded as Finance chairman. That helped engineer the best economic moment for American workers and families in modern history. There were also countless specific achievements for the great State of Utah that Orrin loved so much.

Amid all that legislative heavy lifting, Orrin was also a pivotal player concerning the Senate's part in the personnel business. Amazingly, at the time of Orrin's retirement, he had personally participated in the confirmations for more than half—half—of all the article III judges who had ever served in American history.

Orrin came into the Senate as a young, conservative firebrand. His first campaign for any public office of any kind was the 1976 campaign that landed him here. He left the Senate as a widely admired and universally liked elder statesman. His legacy is peppered with both big, principled victories, bipartisan collaborations, and a roster of friends that spanned the entire political spectrum and sometimes transcended politics altogether.

But there was never any confusing what Orrin viewed as his proudest accomplishment of all. That would be his remarkable marriage to Elaine and their loving family. Alphabetical order has perhaps never served any man better than when "Hatch, Orrin" was assigned the chair next to "Hansen, Elaine" in a Brigham Young University classroom. Decades later, Orrin said, "I can't remember a doggone thing from that astronomy class," but the two of them got 65 inspiring years of marriage and a big, happy brood of kids and grandkids out of the bargain.

So, today, the entire Senate stands with Elaine, the Hatch family, and the huge, huge network of friends, former staffers, and admirers whom Orrin leaves behind across Utah and across our country. We mourn this great loss, and we honor this great life.

INFLATION

Madam President, on an entirely different matter, the Senate reconvenes today, after Passover and Easter, to begin a new work period, but, unfortunately, the biggest problem facing the American people is still the same as it has been all year long. Rising inflation is continuing to inflict painful consequences on working families across our country. This painful problem isn't getting better; it is still getting worse.

Last month, consumer prices clocked an 8.5-percent year-on-year increase.

Inflation is now rising at its fastest pace in more than four decades. The surge is being led in large part by a 23.6-percent jump in airfares, a 35.3-percent increase in used car and truck prices, and a 48-percent spike in the cost of gasoline. These are exactly the sorts of products consumers lean on most heavily in the warmer months.

But, while March's numbers are an extra cruel twist, the American people have been feeling the effects of the Biden administration's war on domestic energy for the better part of a year. Before most folks even began to consider summer travel and long before Putin launched his invasion of Ukraine, working families were already facing soaring prices at the gas pump.

Even as wage growth accelerated for a fifth straight month, workers' paychecks once again failed to keep pace with the steep surge of rising prices. Raises and bonuses are being swallowed by inflation. Real wages are down 2.7 percent year-on-year.

Democrats' runaway spending has brought us runaway inflation. Prices in the United States have risen higher and faster than in other developed economies. Even the New York Times now admits that "risks are mounting that America's ambitious spending will end up with a checkered legacy." Let me say that again. Even the New York Times now admits that "risks are mounting that America's ambitious spending will end up with a checkered legacy."

But even in the face of this painful reality, even as every measurable indicator spells out the clear consequences of reckless runaway spending, Washington Democrats are showing no sign of changing course. President Biden's response to the shaky economy he created is to propose the biggest tax hike in American history and double-digit percentage growth in domestic discretionary spending.

Democrats' policies have working families deep in a financial hole, and our colleagues across the aisle just want to keep digging.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. DUCKWORTH). Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

REMEMBERING ORRIN G. HATCH

Mr. SCHUMER. Now, before I begin the substance of my remarks today, I wanted to note how the Senate mourns the loss of one of its fine public servants. Senator Orrin Hatch, the longest serving Republican in the history of the Senate, the sixth longest serving Member ever, passed away Saturday at the age of 88.